Fixation of Minimum Wages for different categories of Labour

404. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what are the basis for fixing minimum wages for farm labour, industrial, worker, child labour and female labour;

(b) whether the minimum wages fixed have any relation to the poverty level and whether the wages are more than the poverty level; and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether there is any provision to make changes in the minimum wages keeping in view the rise in prices which a labourer in the organised sector is entitled to, while those in the unorganised sector are denied?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) Each appropriate Government assesses the local conditions and follows suitable criteria while fixing the minimum wages. State Governments have been advised to take into consideration all relevant factors including poverty line while fixing minimum wages.

(c) The 31st Session of the State Labour Ministers' Conference held in July, 1980 has recommended that the appropriate Government shall revise the minimum wages after a rise of 50 points in Consumer Price Index Number or after a lapse of two years whichever is earlier. This recommendation has been brought to the notice of all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.

Effect of Modernisation Textile Industry

405. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one traditional loom in the textile industry, when replaced by a modern equipment, will render 24 workers unemployed;

(b) whether any assessment has been made by his Ministry to find out the impact of modernisation of the industry *vis-a-vis* the employment potential it offered during the last three years; and

(c) if so, what are the findings of the study conducted particularly in regard to the amount of investment made in the public and private sector textile mills separately for modernisation, the growth of employment opportunities in each of these sectors and the prospects of employment growth during the next three years?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The additional employment potential created in the last three years in the textile industry is due to increase in the existing capacity in the various sectors of the industry during the period. It is difficult to quantify the likely growth in employment opportunities in the next three years because it will depend on various factors like the pace of modernisation, the number of units that come up, etc.

Meeting of Indian PM and Sri Lankan President to resolve the Ethnic issue

406. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a stage has been reached for a summit meeting between our Prime Minister and President of Sri Lanka

(b) if so, whether any firm date has been fixed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) There are at present no plans for a summit meeting between Prime Minister and the Sri Lankan President.

(b) Does not arise.

Issue of Visas to Israeli Davis Cup Players

407. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to issue visas to Israeli players so that Israel can play Davis Cub Lawn Tennis match against India in India;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) to (c) The venue for the Quarter Final of Davis Cup tie between India and Israel has not yet been decided.

Fighting between Sri Lankan Security Agencies and Tamil Militant Group

408. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 50 thousand people have fled from their homes and taken shelter in temples and churches in Sri Lanka's Northern Jaffna Peninsula following intensified fighting between the security forces and Tamil militant groups; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in the light of the latest development in Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Government has received reports that thousands have been displaced as a result of recent events in the Jaffna Peninsula. It is, however, not possible to give an exact figure.

(b) Government has been closely monitoring developments in Sri Lanka. Government is also in touch with all parties on the need to bring fighting to an end and to resume negotiations for a political settlement.

Felling of forests

409. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI M. A. BABY:
SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE:
SHRI K. MOHANAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased state:

(a) whether Government are aware of illegal felling of forests trees all over the country and especially in Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether the cutting and smuggling of trees has been going on with the collusion of officials of the forest and Revenue Department;

(c) what is the estimated loss of trees as a result thereof during the last three years; and